

## Boat Fishing

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### Policy



Boating for fishing purposes is allowed on Quabbin Reservoir during the Quabbin designated season in three designated areas only: Boat Launch Area 1 (west shore); Area 2 (north shore); and Area 3 (east shore) (see **Map 8**). Please see the map for the designated areas. Boat fishing on the Quabbin Reservoir requires a valid Massachusetts fishing license. All boats must comply with all safety regulations. Watershed Protection Regulation 350 CMR 11.09(2)(b), Special Regulations for Quabbin Reservoir, outline the restrictions related to boating on the reservoir for fishing purposes (**Appendix A**).

Due to recent changes in technology and people's behavior:

- The DCR attendant may refuse any private boat.
- DCR now allows up to 25hp 4 –stroke motor.
- DCR requires chock block use and wearing boots for launching and retrieving boats at designated boat launch areas.
- DCR prohibits chumming in any form such as using pet food, chopped fish, or /and other material dispersed in the water as a fish attractant.
- DCR prohibits the landing of any unauthorized boat on any island.
- Jet boats are allowed with boat size/motor size restrictions described in the regulations.
- Motor size exceptions:
  - All inboard motors or outboards in excess of 25hp can take prop off and mount an outboard motor which meets restrictions of boat size rating-25hp four-stroke maximum
  - 12' boats or larger are allowed to use 10hp motor, if boat is rated for up to 10hp. This is in recognition of historical use of smaller boats at the Quabbin Reservoir. However, attendant may refuse any boat. 12' boats are the most accident prone boats on the reservoir.
  - 25hp, four stroke motors are allowed for boats rated up to 40hp to encourage replacement of two stroke motors and support four stroke motors.

Please contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for up-to-date information regarding designated season, boating requirements, and for the current *Quabbin Fishing Guide*.

## Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds<sup>1</sup></i>
<b>Boat Fishing</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>2</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>

☐ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

## Discussion

The motor boat fishing program at Quabbin is the legacy of political decisions made in the 1950s that were implemented against the wishes of MDC managers at the time. The decision was not the result of public health principles or an equitable resolution of competing interests, but rather reflected the political pressures of the time. With that said, the current operation of the boat fishing program – with its limits on motor size, a designated season (typically mid-April through mid-October), and controlled and managed areas open to launching - does not appear to threaten public health. Since motor boating was implemented, the Quabbin staff, with the cooperation of the organized fishing clubs, has worked to minimize any impacts from the activity on water quality. Presently the program consists of three boat launch areas with a total of 160 rental boats and 50 rental motors.

All boats must be at least twelve feet long. Canoes, kayaks, and jon boats are allowed above the regulating dams at Area 3 in Hardwick on Pottapaug Pond, and at Area 2 in New Salem. Canoes, kayaks, and jon boats are prohibited on the reservoir.

Impacts caused by boat fishing include soil erosion on landing areas, possible contamination by chemicals used in boat maintenance, and possible introduction of exotic, invasive species. Associated impacts include erosion and chemicals left on parking areas, improper disposal of fecal waste, behavior such as littering and vandalism. These impacts may introduce sediment, chemicals, and pathogens to the water.

This policy has not changed.

<sup>1</sup> South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

<sup>2</sup> Boat access on reservoir or regulating ponds requires valid MA Fishing License. Wearing boots is mandatory if wading while launching or removing boats at designated areas from the Reservoir. Fishing access using canoes, kayaks, or jon boats is allowed only through Gate 31 above regulating dam and through Gate 43 on Pottapaug Pond with restrictions. Contact the Quabbin Visitor Center at 413-323-7221 for more information regarding current Fishing Guide.

<sup>3</sup> Carry-in boat access is allowed on off-watershed ponds. See Night Access Policy, if applicable.

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## Canoeing/Kayaking/Boating

### Policy

Non-motorized boating in a canoe, kayak, or boat with a minimum length of 12 feet is allowed on the regulating ponds and off-watershed ponds with a valid fishing license (for access on regulating ponds). “Sit on top” kayaks are prohibited despite size. Canoes less than 16 feet and jon boats less than 14 feet, six inches in length will be limited to two occupants, and canoes and jon boats in excess thereof may be licensed to carry three occupants. All boats must be in compliance with current Commonwealth Boating laws. All boats must be clean and contain no refuse of any kind. Commission personnel shall have the right to inspect all private boats launched at Commonwealth facilities and may deny access in order to protect water quality or the safety of occupants. Please contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for up-to-date information regarding designated season, boating requirements, and for the current Quabbin Fishing Guide.

### Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds<sup>1</sup></i>
<b>Canoeing/ Kayaking/ Boating</b>					□ <sup>2</sup>	□ <sup>3</sup>

□ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

### Discussion

The prevention of human body contact with the drinking water supply is a critical and basic public health protection tool at the Quabbin Reservoir used to minimize the potential of microbial contamination from launching, retrieval, or capsizing. Because canoes and kayaks are designed for body/water contact, they are allowed only in two designated areas for public health and safety reasons. While the damage of non-motorized boats to water quality is lower than motorized boats, soil erosion at launch areas and trails remain common problems associated with the use of non-motorized boats such as canoes and kayaks. Canoes and kayaks have an unstable draft compared to wide bottomed rowboats, can tip more easily, and require a greater level of skill to operate. The DCR is not equipped to determine the skill level of boaters or conduct rescue operations on the reservoir for individuals in non-motorized boats.

This policy has been modified to address canoeing and kayaking.

<sup>1</sup> South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

<sup>2</sup> Allowed with a valid fishing license according to MA Boating regulations and DCR size restrictions.

<sup>3</sup> Allowed with DCR size restrictions.





## Wading (fishing or launching)

### Policy

Wading is prohibited in Quabbin Reservoir except while launching or removing boats while wearing boots, at designated boat launch areas 1, 2, and 3. Wading with boots is allowed in tributaries in Quabbin Reservation between Gate 8 to West Branch Swift River and Gates 22-44, except in restricted areas. Wading is allowed, off-watershed below the Winsor Dam Power Station on the Swift River.

Watershed Protection Regulations 350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)(7) states: “No Person shall wade or swim in any reservoir except wading while using boots for the purpose of launching boats at designated boat launch areas.” The Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations, 310 CMR 22.20(7) states: “No person shall wade or bathe in any source of drinking water supply...” This policy has been clarified.

### Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds<sup>1</sup></i>
<b>Wading (fishing, launching)</b>	 <sup>2</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>	 <sup>4</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>3</sup>

☐ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

### Discussion

Direct body-contact with drinking water is a serious concern due to the potential to introduce pathogens: bacteria, viruses, and protozoa. In addition, walking in and out of the water tramples vegetation and soil along the shoreline. This 1998 policy has been clarified.

<sup>1</sup> South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

<sup>2</sup> Wading is allowed off-watershed and below the Winsor Dam Power Station on the Swift River.

<sup>3</sup> Wading with boots is allowed in Off-Reservation tributaries and tributaries between Gate 8-West Branch Swift River, and Gate 22-44, except in restricted areas.

<sup>4</sup> Wading is prohibited except while launching or removing boats while wearing boots, at designated areas on the Reservoir.







# Swimming

## Policy

Swimming in any surface water of the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is prohibited according to both the Watershed Protection Regulations (310 CMR 11.00) and the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations (310 CMR 22.20):

- 350 CMR 11.00(2)(a)(7) states: “No Person shall wade or swim in any reservoir except wading while using boots for the purpose of launching boats at designated boat launch areas.”
- 310 CMR 22.20(7) states: “No person shall wade or bathe in any source of drinking water supply...”

## Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds<sup>1</sup></i>
Swimming						

## Discussion

Swimming in any public surface water supply, Class A water, is prohibited because direct body-water contact increases the likelihood of microbiological contamination by pathogens including *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. This 1998 policy remains unchanged.

<sup>1</sup> South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.